

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 17, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 2, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 32

Introduced by Assembly Member Lieu

December 1, 2008

An act to amend Section 6254.21 of the Government Code, relating to public records.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 32, as amended, Lieu. Public officials: personal information.

(1) Existing law prohibits a person, business, or association from publicly posting or publicly displaying on the Internet the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official if that official has made a written demand of that person, business, or association to not disclose his or her home address or telephone number, ~~or from~~. *Upon receiving a written demand, a person, business, or association is prohibited from transferring the official's information to any other person, business, or association. Existing law also prohibits soliciting, selling, or trading on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official with the intent to cause bodily harm to the official or to any person residing at the official's home address. Existing law provides various remedies for violation of these provisions.*

This bill would require a person, business, or association, upon receiving the written demand of an elected or appointed official, to ~~immediately~~ remove the official's home address or telephone number from public display on the Internet *within 48 hours of the delivery of the demand*, and to continue to ensure that information is not reposted

on the ~~Internet or any~~ same Internet Web site, a subsidiary site, or any other Internet Web site maintained by the recipient of the written demand.

The bill would specifically exempt a telephone corporation, as defined, from the prohibition on transferring a public official's home address or telephone number after receipt of a written demand if the transfer is necessary in the event of an emergency, to collect a debt owed to the telephone corporation or its affiliate, or as otherwise authorized by state or federal law.

The bill would allow an elected or appointed official to designate the official's employer, *a related governmental entity*, or any voluntary professional association of similar officials to act, on behalf of that official, as that official's agent with regard to making a written demand or seeking enforcement of these posting requirements. *A written demand made by an official's agent would be required to include a statement describing a threat or fear for the official's safety or the safety of those residing in the official's home.*

~~(2) Existing law additionally prohibits a state or local agency from posting the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official on the Internet without first obtaining the written permission of that individual. Existing law also prohibits a person from knowingly posting on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official or of the official's residing spouse or child with intent to cause imminent great bodily harm to that individual.~~

~~Existing law prohibits a person, business, or association from soliciting, selling, or trading on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official with the intent to cause imminent great bodily harm to the official or to any person residing at the official's home address. With regard to a violation of this prohibition, existing law requires a jury or court that finds a violation has occurred to award damages to that official in an amount up to a maximum of 3 times the actual damages but not less than \$4,000.~~

~~This bill would instead require a jury or court to award damages in that amount to an official whose home address or telephone number is solicited, sold, or traded in violation of any of those prohibitions.~~

(2) Under existing law, a public official is authorized to petition a court for injunctive or declarative relief if his or her home address and telephone number are publicly posted despite a written demand, and

the court is empowered to grant official court costs and reasonable attorney's fees for the action.

This bill would authorize a court to also impose a fine not exceeding \$1,000 for violation of an order for an injunction or declarative relief.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 6254.21 of the Government Code is
2 amended to read:
3 6254.21. (a) No state or local agency shall post the home
4 address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official
5 on the Internet without first obtaining the written permission of
6 that individual.
7 (b) No person shall knowingly post the home address or
8 telephone number of any elected or appointed official, or of the
9 official's residing spouse or child, on the Internet knowing that
10 person is an elected or appointed official and intending to cause
11 imminent great bodily harm that is likely to occur or threatening
12 to cause imminent great bodily harm to that individual. A violation
13 of this subdivision is a misdemeanor. A violation of this
14 subdivision that leads to the bodily injury of the official, or his or
15 her residing spouse or child, is a misdemeanor or a felony.
16 (c) (1) (A) No person, business, or association shall publicly
17 post or publicly display on the Internet the home address or
18 telephone number of any elected or appointed official if that official
19 has made a written demand of that person, business, or association
20 to not disclose his or her home address or telephone number.
21 (B) A written demand made under this paragraph by a state
22 constitutional officer, a mayor, or a Member of the Legislature, a
23 city council, or a board of supervisors shall include a statement
24 describing a threat or fear for the safety of that official or of any
25 person residing at the official's home address.
26 (C) A written demand made under this paragraph by an elected
27 official shall be effective for four years, regardless of whether or
28 not the official's term has expired prior to the end of the four-year
29 period.
30 (D) (i) A person, business, or association that receives the
31 written demand of an elected or appointed official pursuant to this

1 paragraph shall ~~immediately~~ remove the official's home address
2 or telephone number from public display on the Internet *within 48*
3 *hours of delivery of the written demand*, and shall continue to
4 ensure that this information is not reposted on the ~~Internet or on~~
5 ~~any subsidiary site~~ *same Internet Web site, subsidiary site, or any*
6 *other Internet Web site maintained by the recipient of the written*
7 *demand. After*

8 (ii) After receiving the elected or appointed official's written
9 demand, the person, business, or association shall not transfer the
10 appointed or elected official's home address or telephone number
11 to any other person, business, or association through any other
12 medium.

13 (iii) *Clause (ii) shall not be deemed to prohibit a telephone*
14 *corporation, as defined in Section 234 of the Public Utilities Code,*
15 *or its affiliate, from transferring the elected or appointed official's*
16 *home address or telephone number to any person, business, or*
17 *association, if the transfer is authorized by federal or state law,*
18 *regulation, order, or tariff, or necessary in the event of an*
19 *emergency, or to collect a debt owed by the elected or appointed*
20 *official to the telephone corporation or its affiliate.*

21 (E) For purposes of this paragraph, "publicly post" or "publicly
22 display" means to intentionally communicate or otherwise make
23 available to the general public.

24 (2) An official whose home address or telephone number is
25 made public as a result of a violation of paragraph (1) may bring
26 an action seeking injunctive or declarative relief in any court of
27 competent jurisdiction. If a ~~jury or~~ court finds that a violation has
28 occurred, it may grant injunctive or declarative relief and shall
29 award the official court costs and reasonable attorney's fees.

30 *A fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) may be imposed*
31 *for a violation of the court's order for an injunction or declarative*
32 *relief obtained pursuant to this paragraph.*

33 (3) An elected or appointed official may designate *in writing*
34 *the official's employer, a related governmental entity, or any*
35 *voluntary professional association of similar officials to act, on*
36 *behalf of that official, as that official's agent with regard to making*
37 *a written demand and taking an enforcement action pursuant to*
38 *this section. That agent shall have the same authority as that official*
39 *to enforce any rights or remedies that are provided by this section.*

40 *A written demand made by an agent pursuant to this paragraph*

1 *shall include a statement describing a threat or fear for the safety*
2 *of that official or of any person residing at the official's home*
3 *address.*

4 (d) (1) No person, business, or association shall solicit, sell, or
5 trade on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an
6 elected or appointed official with the intent to cause imminent
7 great bodily harm to the official or to any person residing at the
8 official's home address.

9 (2) Notwithstanding any other law, an official whose home
10 address or telephone number is solicited, sold, or traded in violation
11 of ~~this section~~ *paragraph (1)* may bring an action in any court of
12 competent jurisdiction. If a jury or court finds that a violation has
13 occurred, it shall award damages to that official in an amount up
14 to a maximum of three times the actual damages but in no case
15 less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000).

16 (e) An interactive computer service or access software provider,
17 as defined in Section 230(f) of Title 47 of the United States Code,
18 shall not be liable under this section unless the service or provider
19 intends to abet or cause imminent great bodily harm that is likely
20 to occur or threatens to cause imminent great bodily harm to an
21 elected or appointed official.

22 (f) For purposes of this section, "elected or appointed official"
23 includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- 24 (1) State constitutional officers.
25 (2) Members of the Legislature.
26 (3) Judges and court commissioners.
27 (4) District attorneys.
28 (5) Public defenders.
29 (6) Members of a city council.
30 (7) Members of a board of supervisors.
31 (8) Appointees of the Governor.
32 (9) Appointees of the Legislature.
33 (10) Mayors.
34 (11) City attorneys.
35 (12) Police chiefs and sheriffs.
36 (13) A public safety official, as defined in Section 6254.24.
37 (14) State administrative law judges.
38 (15) Federal judges and federal defenders.
39 (16) Members of the United States Congress and appointees of
40 the President.

- 1 (g) Nothing in this section is intended to preclude punishment
- 2 instead under Sections 69, 76, or 422 of the Penal Code, or any
- 3 other provision of law.

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